

Bumpus
write

AR011A

ARGENTINA PROJECT (S200000044)
U.S. DEPT. OF STATE, A/RPS/IPS
Margaret P. Grafeld, Director
☒ Release ☐ Excise ☐ Deny
Exemption(s): _____
Declassify: ☐ In Part ☐ In Full
☐ Classify as _____ ☐ Extend as _____ ☐ Downgrade to _____
Date _____ Declassify on _____ Reason _____

Dear Mr. Chairman:

The Secretary has asked me to respond to your letter of January 3 concerning the right of option of political prisoners in Argentina.

At present a three man Military Review Board considers all applications for right of option and recommends those which are judged as not presenting a threat to the Argentine government to President Videla for final approval. According to the Argentine Embassy in Washington, some 130 prisoners have been granted the right of option, or, in the case of foreigners, have been exiled in the last four months.

The United States government has consistently encouraged the Argentine government to restore, and once restored, to liberalize the right of option. The Department is continuing to follow this policy as one way to improve the position of detainees held under the State of Siege provisions of the Argentine Constitution.

Sincerely,

Robert G. Beckel
Acting Assistant Secretary
for Congressional Relations

The Honorable
Donald M. Fraser, Chairman
Subcommittee on International
Organizations,
Committee on International Relations,
House of Representatives.

Drafted: ARA/ECA:JNBumpus:jc
1/11/78:x29166:#S/S 7800170; 002-0460
Clearance: ARA/ECA:RWZimmermann
ARA:GLister
H:CCutter

Lot 81D208
Bx 4963 2/12